



**Livingston Leadership  
Council on Aging  
Presents**

**2018 Executive  
Summary of  
Senior Needs**

# *Executive Summary*



## **Purpose:**

The Livingston Leadership Council on Aging (LLCOA), a Committee under the direction of the Livingston County Board of Commissioners and a partner with the Human Services Collaborative Body (HSCB), explored the need to conduct a full Senior Needs Assessment in the community in 2018.

## **Scope:**

The last full senior needs assessment was completed in 2008 and resulted in the formation of the LLCOA.

Both **SNA 2008 Final Full Report** and **2008 SNA Final Summary Report** can be found at [www.livgov.com/hscb/Pages/seniorneeds.aspx](http://www.livgov.com/hscb/Pages/seniorneeds.aspx)

Several Livingston County agencies conduct Community Needs Assessments and Surveys annually/bi-annually to collect baseline data and feedback from consumers. LLCOA chose to review the various surveys and see if we are able to assess the current needs without a full assessment being purchased and conducted again.

## **Method of investigation:**

Explore data points throughout the community that specifically addressed senior services and needs.

- Conduct a thorough step by step review of the Goals from the 2008 Senior Needs Assessment and identify which Goals were accomplished, which had progress and which remain today.

**LCCOA Senior CNA Review 2018** can be found at [www.livgov.com/hscb/Pages/seniorneeds.aspx](http://www.livgov.com/hscb/Pages/seniorneeds.aspx)

- Gather data from other current County Assessments
  - > 2016-17 Community Health Status Assessment of Seniors
  - > 2016-17 Community Themes and Strengths Assessment of Senior Services
  - > 2017 United Way ALICE Report
  - > Area Agency on Aging Current Statistics for our County
- Gather data from other current County Surveys
  - > 2014 LLCOA Senior Survey
  - > 2016 Hartland Senior Center Survey
  - > 2017 Hartland Senior Center Survey
- Gather data from Service Providers in the County
  - > Department of Health and Human Services
  - > Senior Reach Program
  - > 211 Data
  - > LACASA Data
  - > Alzheimer Association Data
  - > OLHSA Data
  - > St. Joseph Mercy Hospital Data
  - > Livingston County Catholic Charities Senior Program Data
- Review the 2017 Washtenaw Health Older Adult Resource Survey's Top Needs

The Life Expectancy in Livingston County shows as anywhere from 72 through 86 years. With a large majority in the 78 to 82 year range

The above raw data was cross referenced in the **2018 Senior Needs Crosswalk**, which can be found at [www.livgov.com/hscb/Pages/seniorneeds.aspx](http://www.livgov.com/hscb/Pages/seniorneeds.aspx)

According to AAA1B, \$2,436,388 in Federal and State funding and another \$80,850 in County funds helped Livingston County Seniors in FY2017.





## Findings:

The LLCOA conducted a Crosswalk of all data points to see which ones validated the needs identified from the review of the 2008 Assessment and Goals. Despite a number of efforts on all fronts and a number of programs and services developed over the years, there are a number of items that continue to remain as needs and others that have only been partially met.



Some of these needs are being handled by other workgroups and initiatives and in turn LLCOA is supporting the efforts of those entities. Other items continue to need focus and attention as they are not expected to change. An example is falls. We have a number of Fall Prevention activities, events and awareness materials, yet seniors still have a large number of falls each year requiring hospitalization. This need will require on-going attention and support.

There are a number of agencies, health providers, senior centers and other county initiatives that attempt to provide supports for seniors despite limited or no funding, creating a fragment in the quality and quantity of services attempting to be provided. As an example, we continue to have 2 Senior Centers in the county without paid staff and limited supports for their seniors. We also recently lost funding for the Senior Reach Program, which is the only program that provided home based Senior Counseling in the county. These gaps continue to impact the ability for Livingston County older adults to access and receive needed resources. Not only is there a glaring lack of equity for our seniors in that those who live in our more rural areas, have even less access to centers, supports and resources, but they also have statistically more challenges with isolation and transportation. This dynamic has the potential for even more health and age related challenges.

345,142 Units of  
In-Home and  
Community Based  
Services provided in  
2017 by AAA1B

<i>Population Changes</i>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2030</b>
<b>Older Adults (60+)</b>	45,235	49,022	57,585	62,781

## Conclusions:

As stated in the Area Agency on Aging 2017 Report, Livingston County's Older Adult Population(65+) makes up 24% of the total population in the county. This population is expected to increase another 39% in the next 12 years. This means that our existing system of supports for this population is not only NOT meeting the current needs, but woefully unprepared for the projected increases.

The group also noted that a willingness to be creative and support the needs of our seniors is visible through all of our systems. Non-profits, State Agencies, Hospital Associations and the various County Departments all work to prioritize the needs of older adults with their limited funding. They are creative and collaborative, which allows there to be a responsive system despite limited funds.

The Crosswalk Process and Data Review resulted in 12 key areas of focus. These areas are identified as current needs in the community and the group felt each area needs focus and support.

- ◇ More Geriatric Physicians
- ◇ More Wellness Activities
- ◇ More Home Care Providers
- ◇ More Home Modification Support
- ◇ Continued Fall Prevention Efforts
- ◇ Expand and Strengthen Senior Centers
- ◇ Comprehensive Transportation
- ◇ More Accessible Information
- ◇ More Home delivered meals
- ◇ More Adult Day Care
- ◇ More supports for Substance Use Disorders
- ◇ Preventative supports for Elder Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

60% of all Hospital  
inpatient  
Discharges at St.  
Joseph Mercy  
Hospital in  
Livingston are 65 or  
older.



## Recommendations:

### More Geriatric Physicians

The three hospitals in our County currently have no geriatric specialists in Livingston County. The Council will share this identified need with them and request to address this issue by taking a look at ways to increase geriatric specialists available in the county. The Council feels this need requires coordination with existing hospitals to ensure prioritization of this current need.

### More Wellness Activities

The Council identified that most Wellness Activities occur at the hospitals or with the local Senior Centers. The recommendations are to follow up with both the Hospital Representative and the senior centers to see what is happening and what should be happening. The LLCOA has a number of Senior Centers represented on the Council and it appears that wellness activities are offered and happening, but limited based on funds. More need to be done to expand these programs. In addition, chronic disease numbers for our older adults validate the need to have strategies in place to increase these activities. According to the most recent risk factors surveys, the county's numbers are high for Obesity, Diabetes, pre-Diabetes, Asthma, Binge Drinking and poor physical health. Many respondents also admitted to not having a personal health care provider, and not having access to health care based on cost.

According to the National Council on Aging, NCOA, 80% of older adults have at least one chronic disease and 77% have at least 2.

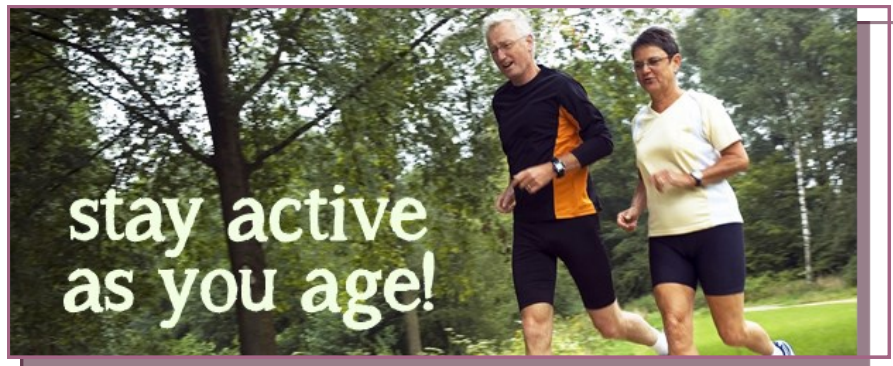


### More Home Care Providers

This need is one that is seen throughout the state as this field continues to lose employees due to low wages. The ultimate goal for senior services is to help our older adults age in their home and not be “forced” to move to a more restrictive environment. As more of our older adults exercise the right to stay where they are, the need for flexible home care



increases. The Council hopes to work with local providers to explore employee retention supports and increase the number of employees we have in this field. Internships and nursing hours were discussed as possible untapped supports. Stipends and/or pay were considered.



### More Home Modification Supports

Livingston County has supports to help with this need, but the need far exceeds the available supports. There is limited funding available and it usually covers only a portion of what is needed. In addition waitlists are common. The Council would like to work with our local agencies and faith-based providers to understand where the gaps are. Is it volunteers to help do the modifications? Is it funds to cover the cost of the modifications? Are there larger needs that are not even considered (like ramps, doorways, etc.)

Once the gaps are uncovered and the group is able to have a more comprehensive picture of the needs, a plan will be developed. This may bump into the limitations of funds available for this need.

### Continued Fall Prevention Efforts

This area is not considered a gap, but more of a continued need and focus. The Community Offers “A Matter of Balance” Trainings throughout the year and throughout the county. This fall prevention program provides information and resources for how to make your home safer and how to walk to reduce your chances of falling. A fall for this population can have longer term impacts. Seniors continue to be over 60% of all hospital inpatient stays. The Council hopes to ensure all Senior Centers are able to provide supports for these classes and engage their community members in securing safe homes.

According to the NCOA, Every 11 seconds, an older adult is treated in the emergency room for a fall. Every 19 minutes, an older adult dies from a fall.

## Expand and Strengthen Senior Centers

The Council felt this really is a main Goal for our work. Senior Centers are really the life blood of aging. They provide a safe place to go and socialize. They often have meal programs that ensure our seniors are eating regularly. They have classes, exercise, programs, presentation and other resources to ensure our older adults have access to the supports they need. These sites reduce isolation and increase health factors.



Our County offers 7 Senior Centers that serve the County. Of those Centers, only 5 have paid staff helping to facilitate and run the center. Of those 5, only 2 are full-time employees. The centers rely on volunteers to keep the doors open. In addition, each center has different funding. Most rely on the generosity of the township for which they serve. Local school district support and city funds are also provided. The Centers each have programs, services and resources, but they are not equitable across each center. This inequity results in less access and availability for the seniors that live in certain areas of our county.

The Council would like to explore ways to develop more equitable programs and services across the 7 centers. The lack of adequate funding is a barrier for these efforts, but the group hopes to identify a more successful structure for the county that would ensure all seniors have access to a center. Components of this structure could include county-wide oversight and coordination to ensure each center has the resources they need, adequate staff and volunteers to meet the needs of the seniors in that area. Programs, classes, activities and presentations coordinated to ensure each center has like opportunities, etc. This will be a main focus for the Council as we believe a more successful Senior Center system will address the other needs identified.

According to Area Agency on Aging 1B, Senior Centers are a great place to get active, explore new interests or make new friends. Most offer a variety of programs ranging from fitness classes, computer training, arts & crafts, day trips and travel.



## Comprehensive Transportation

The Council recognized that the Transportation Coalition in collaboration with LETS and the Board of Commissioners is undergoing a contracted planning process to look at our Transportation System and identify ways to improve/expand the services in our county. It is our expectation that this area will be addressed by that group. Results will be shared with the Council.

## More Accessible Information

The Council recognizes this area directly connects with the increased support to Senior Centers. Senior Centers are often the place our older adults obtain their information. Some of our centers have newsletters. Others have social media connections. And still others have no on-going communications. Again, this is an area the Council would like to focus. Ensuring each center has the resources needed to keep our older adults informed and aware. A recent example would be the need to inform older adults of the Hepatitis A outbreak. Without current communication processes, it was difficult to ensure we reached all of our older adults.



## Expansion of Meals on Wheels

The Council discussed the current capacity of the Meals on Wheels Program. Despite their ability to support the current requests with a lot of fundraising and creativity, they will be stretched beyond capacity with the influx of additional seniors. There is effort to develop a more successful system for home meals and once that new system, including a potential building, is formed, the case could be made to expand the services provided in the county. Including looking at more than just one meal per day.

115,073  
Home  
Delivered  
Meals in 2017

## Adult Day Care Programs

The Council discussed the large waitlist we have in the county for Adult Day Care. There is currently only one place offering this needed service. The Council recognizes that having a safe place for our older adults to go during the work day is critical to aging in place. The current program is full with a never ending waitlist. It is again an area that will only increase and should be on the radar for any county-wide system plan.

## Substance Use Supports

The Council did not see a factor in the data related to this, but knows that providers are seeing an increase in older adults seeking supports for substance use disorders. This includes alcohol, but also the ever increasing use and misuse of prescription drugs. The reason this is not showing as a major identified need is older adults are not talking about it. There still continues to be enough stigma related to substance use to cause this need to be underreported. The Council hopes that connecting with the successful county-wide substance use response system, we can support this underreported need.

According to the NCOA, the number of older adults with substance use problems is expected to double by 2020.



## Preventative supports for Elder Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

The Council recognized that this factor was identified back in 2008, but very little has been done to address it, so decided it needed to remain an area of focus. There continues to be situations where older adults are taken advantage of and mistreated. These cases can often be by their own families or people responsible for their care. The Council hopes to increase the awareness of seniors about scams and other mistreatments, but also to arm them better to identify potential situations in advance and prevent becoming victims. The Livingston County Elder Abuse Task Force was developed earlier this year and will be critical partners in addressing these needs.

"Caring for our Seniors is perhaps the greatest responsibility we have.

Those who walked before us have given so much and made possible the life we all enjoy."

- JOHN HOEVEN

DEMENTIA DIARIES @  
FourGenerationsOneRoad

## Next Steps:

As an outcome of the 2008 Senior Needs Assessment, Livingston Leadership Council on Aging (LLCOA) was formed to provide direction and oversight for the recommendations identified in the original assessment report. Over the past 10 years LLCOA has made some progress in developing resource materials, bringing senior centers to the table to look at coordination of services and encouraging local municipalities to look at “senior friendly” ordinances. The recommendations within the 2008 report goes well beyond the scope and capacity of LLCOA and many of the agencies providing services to the aging population. The issues and disparities among service agencies and the seniors continues to grow.

*“Some people are old at 18 and some people are young at 90...Time is a concept that humans created.” - Yoko Ono*



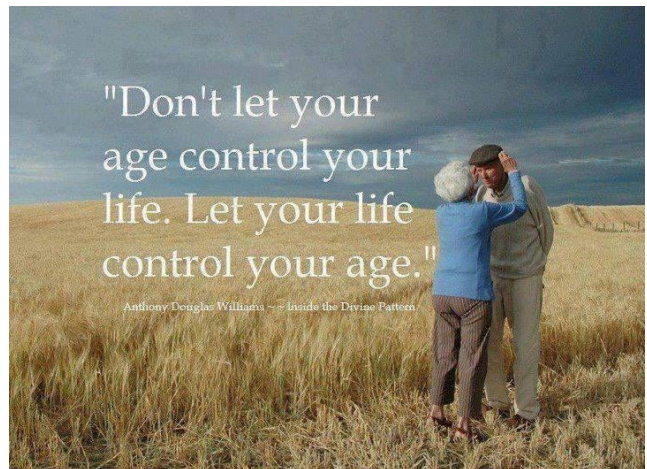
**Lets Get Moving!**

1. Share the Executive Report with the Board of Commissioners to see how it fits with their priorities for the community.
2. As a baseline of comparison, LLCOA recommends that the Area Agency on Aging (Aaa1B) examine the level of services provided to the senior population in a “sister county” with comparable socioeconomic demographics to Livingston.
3. LLCOA will continue to prioritize the updated issues identified in this report and determine who might be best suited in the community to address the issues identified.
  - Work with local hospitals to increase geriatric specialists and services.
  - Work with local hospitals and seniors centers to increase wellness activities.
  - Work with home care providers to sustain their staff and identify creative ways to meet this need.





- Work with existing home modification supports, like churches and OLHSA to explore unmet needs and gaps. Work to identify volunteers or low costs options for these needs.
- Continue to work with seniors centers to provide Fall prevention information and awareness.
- One of our major goals is to support the expansion and equity of the senior centers in the county. Identify ways to increase supports, share resources and expand services. Senior Centers are really the lifeline for our seniors and ensuring they have the information and access needed to continue to age in place is critical.
- Work with the Transportation Coalition and LETS to increase transportation services in the county.
- Help Meals on Wheels to prepare for increased requests.
- Recognize and prepare for the increased need of adult day care programs.
- Support the development of awareness and resources for older adults with regards to substance use and prescriptions and abuse, neglect and exploitation.



## In Closing:

Aging is not a condition where the local supports and services can “fix” or “reduce” with effort and education. It is never going to stop and in fact will be increasing. The Council hopes to prepare our community for these increases, by making sure the supports structure is comprehensive, flexible and adaptive to changing needs. It is time for us to explore ways to fund these services in a manner that is equitable among all areas of our county. We want our seniors to be able to age in place.

*The Trick to Aging Gracefully is to Enjoy It!*

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